



★ VIRGINIA ★
STATE BOARD *of* ELECTIONS

How to Run for Office For Candidates and Party Representatives

Requirements for the
March 3, 2020 Presidential Primary Election

Who is this document for?

For candidates who want to file to run for President in the Primary, go to page 4.

For political party representatives, go to page 9.

Important definitions and key icons

Follow these instructions to **get on the ballot for President in the Presidential Primary Election on Tuesday March 3, 2020.**

Independent candidate – an individual who is seeking to run in a General Election without running as a Republican or Democrat (may include a recognized party or no party)

Political party – An organization that, at either of the two preceding statewide general elections, received at least 10 percent of the total vote cast for any statewide office filled in that election (currently only Democratic and Republican)

Primary candidate – an individual who is seeking the nomination of a political party by running in a primary

Qualified voter – A person who is entitled to vote under the Virginia Constitution and is properly registered to vote (see [definition here](#))

Recognized political party – An organization that meets the requirements set out in Va. Code § 24.2-612

Va. Code – Virginia Code



- Notes where to find information in the Code of Virginia or Virginia Administrative Code.



- Indicates beginning and/or ending deadlines for filing documents.



- Indicates information on where to file documents.



- Indicates additional information that may be helpful.

Only the Republican and Democratic parties run a presidential primary on March 3, 2020.

The Democratic Party of Virginia and the Republican Party of Virginia are the only organizations currently recognized as political parties under § 24.2-101 of the *Code of Virginia*. Therefore, they are the only political parties permitted to select a presidential primary in connection with the respective national conventions in the summer of 2020.

The deadlines provided below apply only to those political parties and candidates who wish to participate in either party's presidential primary. They do not apply to independent candidates or candidates for a recognized political party.

Election deadlines for voters 2020

Type of election	Candidates: last day to file	Parties: last day to file	Last day to register to vote	Last day to apply for an absentee ballot	Election Date
Primary for Nov 3 general.	Thursday Dec 12th, 2019 at 5pm	Tuesday Dec 17th, 2019 at 5pm	Monday, Feb 10th, 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person: 5:00 pm • Online: 11:59 pm 	Online, fax, or mail: Tuesday February 25 th , 2020 at 5 pm. In-person: Saturday Feb 29 th , 2020 at 5:00 pm.	Tuesday March 3 rd , 2020
Find in code	Va. Code §§ 24.2-544	Va. Code § 24.2-544	Va. Code §§ 24.2-414 and 24.2-416	Va. Code § 24.2-701	Va. Code § 24.2-515

I want to run in my party's primary.

Use this table to learn what, when, and where to file. [Find more information below this table.](#)

What do I need to file?	Notes or other information	Where do I file this form?	When does filing open?	What is the deadline to file?
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The following 3 forms are required by all candidates filing for this election.

1	Declaration of Candidacy	File with the Petitions of Qualified Voters (2) and Petition Statement (3).	Must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline.	Monday , July 1, 2019	Thursday December 12, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.
2	Petition of Qualified Voters	Do not collect signatures before July 1, 2019. File these in a sealed container. File with the Consent/Declaration (1) and the Petition Statement (3).	Must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline.	Monday, July 1, 2019	Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.
3	Petition Statement	File with Declaration of Candidacy (1) and must be attached to the outside of the Petitions of Qualified Voters (2).	Must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline.	Monday, July 1, 2019	Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

The following documents may be required depending on your party's rules. Check with your party to know if these forms are required.

List of National Convention Delegates and Alternates	File list of delegates and alternates if the party's delegates are selected at the primary. File with (1), (2), and (3).	With the Department of Elections. If required, must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline.	Monday, July 1, 2019	Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.
Primary Filing Fee	No filing fee is required for the presidential primary.			
Campaign Finance Reports	Candidates for President do not file reports with the Department of Elections.	With the Federal Election Commission (FEC).		

The following three steps are required for your candidacy:

- 1. Fill out and submit [Declaration of Candidacy \(SBE-505/520\(P\)\)](#).



Find in Virginia Code [§ 24.2-520](#).



Presidential Primary candidates

File starting **July 1st, 2019**.

File ending **December 12th, 2019 at 5 pm**.

This form must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline. Forms postmarked by the deadline, but received after the deadline will not be accepted.



Submit this form to the Department of Elections.



File along with the Petitions of Qualified Voters and the Petition Statement.

- Fill the form out completely.
- Make sure the witness or notary statement is completed.

After you submit this form:

- The Department of Elections puts your information into the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS).
- The Department of Elections posts your contact information on the Department website.

- 2. Collect petition signatures and submit the [Petitions of Qualified Voters \(SBE-545\)](#).



Find in Va. Code §§ [24.2-521](#) and [24.2-545](#).

Find in Virginia Administrative Code [1 VAC 20-50-20](#) and [1 VAC 20-50-30](#).

Contact your attorney for guidance.



Do not collect signatures before

July 1, 2019.

You can collect signatures between

Monday, July 1st, 2019 through Thursday, December 12th, 2019.

You can submit signatures:

Monday, July 1st, 2019 through Thursday, December 12th, 2019 at 5:00pm



File the original petition pages with the Department of Elections.



File along with the Declaration of Candidacy and the Petition Statement.

Number of petition signatures you need from qualified voters

Total: 5,000 signatures

From each of the 11 Congressional Districts: 200 signatures

Things to remember about petitions:

Petition Pages must...

- be on the form from the State Board of Elections, and you cannot alter it in any way
- be either letter or legal size. Both are available on the [Department of Elections website](#).
- be one page printed on the front and back. You can make as many copies as you need.
- contain the signature, printed full name, and full residence address of each qualified voter and the date the voter signed. The last four (4) digits of the qualified voter's Social Security number are helpful, but not required.

The petition circulator...

- must be a resident of the United States and must sign the affidavit for each page in front of a notary.
- cannot be the circulator of the page on which they sign the petition.

When filing your petition pages...

- Each page should contain signatures from only one locality and congressional district. It is helpful to track signatures by congressional district, and there is a place on the page to enter that information.
- Please file the pages in ascending order by congressional district to facilitate processing.
- Deliver the Petitions for the Presidential Primary to the Department of Elections in a sealed container. The Department of Elections will deliver the sealed container to the state chair of the candidate's political party. The state chair is the only person who can open the sealed container(s).

When collecting your petition signatures, it is helpful to remember that...

- Because people who are not registered to vote often sign petitions for candidates, we recommended that you collect at least 7,500 signatures with at least 300 from each congressional district.

☐ 3. Fill out and submit the [Petition Statement \(ELECT-545B\)](#).



Find in Virginia Code § [24.2-545](#).



File starting **July 1st, 2019**.

File ending **December 12th, 2019 at 5 pm**.



Submit this form to the Department of Elections.



File along with the Declaration of Candidacy and Petitions of Qualified Voters.
Attach this form to the first sealed container of petitions.

The Department of Elections provides the ELECT-545B for your use, but you may use your own form. If you use your own form, make sure it contains the following pieces of information:

- Name of the presidential candidate
- Total number of signatures on petitions in the container(s)

Check with your party to see if the following steps are required for your candidacy:

- ☐ List of national convention delegates and alternates.



Find in Virginia Code § [24.2-545](#).



File starting **July 1st, 2019**.

File ending **December 12th, 2019 at 5 pm**.



Submit this information to the Department of Elections.



Submit along with the Declaration of Candidacy, Petitions of Qualified Voters, and Petition Statement.

ONLY submit these lists if your political party has determined that delegates to the National Convention will be selected based on the results of the primary.

There is no official form for this list.

How do I withdraw my candidacy?



Submit by **Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 5:00 pm** to have your name removed from the ballot.

If you submit any time after December 18 at 5:00 pm, your name will not be removed from the ballot, but you will no longer be a candidate.



Submit your written withdrawal to your state party chair.



To be withdrawn from the ballot you must submit a signed written notice declaring your intent to withdraw from the primary.

I am the state chair of the Democratic or Republican Party. What, when, and where do I file?

Use this table to learn what, when, and where to file. [Find more information below this table.](#)

	What do I need to file?	Notes or other information	Where do I file this form?	When does filing open?	What is the deadline to file?
The following 2 items are required to be filed by the State Party Chair.					
1	Notice of Nomination Method § 24.2-545(A)	Notify the State Board of Elections of choice of primary or other method of nomination. Include any rules for participation in a primary (if applicable).	Must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline. Will be accepted if sent via email from the party chair.	Monday , July 1, 2019	Wednesday December 4 th , 2019 at 5:00 p.m.
2	Certification of Presidential Primary Candidates § 24.2-545(B)	List all certified by the party as candidates for the presidential primary.	Must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline. Will be accepted if sent via email from the party chair.	Friday, December 13 th , 2019	Tuesday, December 17 th , 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

Follow these steps to file your party's paperwork:

☐ 1. Submit Notice of Nomination Method.



Find in Virginia Code [§ 24.2-545\(A\)](#).



File starting **July 1st, 2019**.

File ending **December 4th, 2019 at 5 pm**.

This notice must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline. Notices postmarked by the deadline, but received after the deadline will not be accepted. The notice can be emailed to the Department (ea@elections.virginia.gov) by the party chair.

There is no form for this notice. A letter to the State Board of Elections with all required information is sufficient.



Submit this to the Department of Elections.



Include this required information:

- The method the party will use to determine its delegates to the National Convention (primary or other method);
- If the party chooses a primary, any voter in the Commonwealth may participate. The party may also add additional requirements to participate. If the party adds additional requirements, include those in the notice letter.

□ 2. File the [Certification of Presidential Primary Candidates \(SBE-545\)](#).



Find in Va. Code [§ 24.2-545\(B\)](#).



File starting **Friday, December 13th, 2019.**

File ending **Tuesday, December 17th, 2019 at 5 pm.**

This form must be in the possession of the Department of Elections by the deadline. Forms postmarked by the deadline, but received after the deadline will not be accepted. The form can be emailed to the Department (ea@elections.virginia.gov) by the party chair.



Submit this form to the Department of Elections.



The candidate filing deadline is Thursday, December 12th, 2019 at 5:00pm. Immediately after the deadline, the Department of Elections will provide all candidate material to the state party chair.

The state party chair is the only person permitted by law to open the sealed candidate petitions.

After evaluating the candidates' materials, list on the form all individuals who have met the requirements to be a candidate in your party's Presidential Primary Election.

On December 18th, The State Board of Elections will conduct a drawing to determine the order the candidates' names will be listed on the ballot.

What do I do when a candidate withdraws?



Candidate must submit by **Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 5:00 pm** to have their name removed from the ballot.

Candidates who submit any time after December 18 will not be removed from the ballot, but they will no longer be a candidate.



Submit the written withdrawal to the Department of Elections as soon as possible after you receive it. The letter can be emailed to ea@elections.virginia.gov from the party chair's email address.



To be withdrawn from the ballot, a candidate must submit a signed written notice declaring their intent to withdraw from the primary.

If a withdrawal is received close to or at the 5:00 pm deadline on December 18th, please follow up immediately by phone to ensure the withdrawal was received by the Department.

General Disclaimer

The electronic version of this Candidate Bulletin can be found on the Department of Elections website:
<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/candidatepac-info/candidate-bulletins/index.html>

Candidates are responsible for complying with all current applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

This Candidate Bulletin provides an overview of Virginia electoral requirements only. It does not purport to provide legal advice or binding statements of official policy. Rather, the Candidate Bulletin describes election law found in the Code of Virginia. Applicable laws and regulations are subject to change in content and interpretation.